

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 IO-14 DPW-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 EUR-25 NEA-10 ACDA-19

EB-11 OMB-01 DRC-01 /194 W
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P 041807Z JAN 74

FM USDEL JEC PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 171
INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JEC PARIS 0319

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, VS
SUBJECT: GVN-PRG BILATERALS 35TH PLENARY SESSION, JANUARY 4, 1974

1. SUMMARY.

WHILE THE GVN TOOK THE INITIATIVE IN CALLING FOR
A "NEW ATMOSPHERE AND NEW SPIRIT" TO REINVIGORAT THE TALKS, THE
PRG MERELY REITERATED ITS "THREE DEMANDS." PHONG (GVN)
REAFFIRMED STANDING GVN PROPOSALS FOR GRADUAL SETTLEMENT OF
POLITICAL AND MILITARY PROBLEMS, CULMINATING IN GENERAL ELECTIONS.
THI (PRG) RFERRED TO PRESIDENT THIEU'S VUNG TAU PSEECH IN
ATTEMPTING TO DISCREDIT GVN INTENTIONS. HE TRIED TO HOLD THE US
RESPONSIBLE FOR GVN "WAR POLICY." BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED
THEMSELVES WITH SOMEWHAT LESS INVECTIVE THAN IN PRECEDING
SESSIONS. THEYMEET AGAIN JANUARY 11. END SUMMARY

2. PHONG, ACTING CHIEF, GVNDEL, SPOKE FIRST. HE APPEALED TO
THE OTHER SIDE TO RESPECT THE NEW YEAR BY COOPERATING IN "A NEW
ATMOSPHERE AND ANEW SPIRIT TO BEGIN A NEW PHASE IN OURTALKS". THERE
WERE, HE SAID, FOUR ESSENTIAL ISSUES BEFORE THE CONFERENCE:
DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS; THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NATIONAL RE-
CONCILIATION AND CONCORD(NCNR), THE ORGANIZATION OF GENERAL
ELECTIONS; AND VIETNAMESEARMED FORCES IN SVN. QUESTIONS
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RELATING TO THE CEASE-FIRE AND PRISONER RELEASED WERE OUTSIDE THE CONFERENCE'S SCOPE, SINCE RESPONSIBILITY FOR BOTH IMPLEMENTING AND SUPERVISING ASPECTS OF THESE TWO ITEMS WAS ASSIGNED TO THETPJM AND ICCS BY THE AGREEMENT.

3. PHONG THEN REVIEWED GVN PROPOSALS CONCERNING THE FOUR MAIN ISSUES. PROCEDURALLY, THE GVN FAVORED SIMULTANEOUS RESOLUTION OF POLITICAL AND MILITARY ISSUES, ACCORDING TO A PRECISE, AGREED TIMETABLE, AND THROUGH COORDINATED DELIBERATIONS OF WORKING GROUPS. THE CONFERENCE WOULD THEREBY REACH A COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT SETTING IN TRAIN A PROCESS CULMINATING IN GENERAL ELECTIONS.

4. IN A RESUME OF GVN POSITIONS ON THE RESPECTIVE SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS PHONG SAID THAT THE ULTIMATE AIM OF THE CONFERENCE SHOULD BE INTERNATIONALLY SUPERVISED GENERAL ELECTIONS FOR A "SOVEREIGN BODY" WHICH WOULD DETERMINE GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS AT BOTH NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS. MODALITIES FOR SUCH ELECTIONS WOULD BE WORKED OUT BY THE NCNRC, THE NUMBER OF WHOSE MEMBERS AND MEANS OF THEIR DESIGNATION TO BE JOINTLY AGREED BETWEEN THE GVN AND PRG. RESTRICTIONS ON DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS OCCASIONED BY WARTIME NECESSITY WOULD BE LIFTED BY BOTH SIDES ONCE AN OVERALL AGREEMENT HAD BEEN SIGNED. NON-SVN ARMED FORCES SHOULD RETURN TO THEIR "COUNTRY OF ORIGIN", AND THE GVN WOULD DEMOBILIZE EQUIVALENT NUMBERS OF TROOPS, WITH THE PHASING OF THIS PROCESS TO BE ELABORATED BY THE CONFERENCE'S WORKING GROUP ON ARMED FORCES. IN CLOSING PHONG ASKED THAT THE TWO SIDES SET A REASONABLE DEADLINE FOR COMPLETING THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE.

5. "AMBASSADOR" THI, DEPUTY CHIEF, PRGDEL, REASSERTED THE GOOD FAITH AND SERIOUS INTENT OF THE PRG TO NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE GVN. HOWEVER, THE GVN WAS CONTINUING ITS POLICY OF "CONQUEST BY FORCE," AS ALLEGEDLY EVIDENCED BY OVER 305 THOUSAND GVN VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASEFIRE BY CHRISTMAS DAY.

6. THI THEN ATTEMPTED A LONG ATTACK ON GVN DOMESTIC POLICY. HE CHARGED THE GVN WITH ATTEMPTING SYSTEMATIC RUIN OF THE POPULATION THROUGH A COMBINATION OF EXORBITANT TAXATION, RAMPAGING INFLATION AND CONTRIVED RICE SHORTAGES. ALLEGING THAT PRESIDENT THIEU'S DECEMBER 29 REMARKS AT VUNG TAU HAD EXPOSED INTENT TO "ERASE THE FUNDAMENTAL CONTENTS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT," THI HELD THAT GVNDEL'S REFERENCES TO GENERAL ELECTIONS WERE NO MORE THAN AN

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ATTEMPT TO DUPE PUBLIC OPINION. THE GVN WAS ALLEGEDLY DEEPENING ITS PREFERENCE FOR ARMED CONFLICT RATHER THAN NEGOTIATION, AND THIS WAS DUE TO PROLONGATION OF THE "US PLOT TO DOMINATE SVN".

7. THI CLOSED BY REITERATING THE PRG "THREE DEMANDS": IMMEDIATE NEGOTIATION OF A NEW CEASEFIRE; IMMEDIATE RESUMPTION OF PRISONER EXCHANGES, WITH THE 5081 GVN-HELD PRISONERS TO BE RELEASED BY TET;

IMMEDIATE GUARANTEE OF DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS.

8. IMPROMPTU REMARKS BY THE TWO SIDES WERE IN THE SAME RESPECTIVE
VEINS AND COVERED NO NEW GROUND. IT WAS GREED TO RECONVENE JANUARY
11.

9. AT THE PRG PRESS CONFERENCE SPOKESMAN THAO ANNOUNCED THAT
SUCH CONFERENCES WOULD HENCEFORTH NOT BE HELD WEEKLY, BUT AS
OCCASION DEMANDED. (COMMENT: THIS DEVELOPMENT IS PROBABLY DUE TO
THE UTTER LACK OFINTEREST SHOWN BY THE PARIS PRESS CORPS). IN
RESPONSE TO THE SINGLE QUESTION PUT TO HIM THAO DENIED WIRE SERVICE
REPORTS THAT THE GVN AND PRG HAD REACHED AGREEMENT ON RESUMPTION
OF PRISONER RELEASES. GDS
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PEACE TALKS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974JECPA00319
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: JEC PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740162/aaaacgqs.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 APR 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <24 APR 2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GVN-PRG BILATERALS 35TH PLENARY SESSION, JANUARY 4, 1974
TAGS: PINT, VS
To: n/a
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005